

DATELINE, WASHINGTON D.C. #137  
ALINA ZERANSKI

DECEMBER 15, 1976

THE LLOYD HOUSE: RESTORED AND USEFUL  
(INSERTS AVAILABLE IN TAPE LIBRARY)

ANNCR: DATELINE: WASHINGTON D.C. -- PICTURES IN SOUND OF PEOPLE PLACES AND EVENTS IN AND AROUND THE NATION'S CAPITAL -- BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE VOICE OF AMERICA EACH WEEK AT THIS TIME. TODAY, A REPORT PREPARED BY ALINA ZERANSKI ABOUT A SUCCESSFUL CITIZENS' CAMPAIGN TO SAVE A HISTORIC LANDMARK IN NEARBY ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA.

NARR: A LOVELY OLD HOUSE HAS BEEN OPENED TO THE PUBLIC TO USE AND ENJOY AS A LIBRARY OF HISTORY IN A TRUE HISTORIC SETTING. IT IS THE LLOYD HOUSE IN ALEXANDRIA, WHICH BY THE WAY, IS A TRULY OLD TOWN BY AMERICAN STANDARDS. ALEXANDRIA WAS NAMED FOR JOHN ALEXANDER, WHO IN 1659 BOUGHT VAST LANDS ON THE BANKS OF THE POTOMAC RIVER. FOR OVER A HUNDRED YEARS HIS FAMILY PLAYED A LEADING ROLE IN THE GROWING TOWN OF WEALTHY MERCHANTS AND SEA CAPTAINS. ALEXANDRIA REACHED THE PEAK OF PROMINENCE IN MID 18TH CENTURY, WHEN IT WAS A CENTER OF HISTORICAL EVENTS AND SOCIAL LIFE FOR MANY GENTLEMEN FROM SURROUNDING PLANTATIONS, AMONG THEM GEORGE WASHINGTON. LATER, WHEN THE AMERICAN CAPITAL WAS BUILT JUST ACROSS THE RIVER, ALEXANDRIA BEGAN A PERIOD OF DECLINE. NOW, WITH THE GROWING APPRECIATION OF THE NATION'S HERITAGE, IT IS FLOURISHING AGAIN. THE OLDEST EXISTING HOUSE DATES FROM 1724 AND HAS BEEN TURNED INTO A MUSEUM. MANY OF THE FINE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURY BUILDINGS HAVE BEEN CAREFULLY RESTORED BY CITIZENS GROUPS OR PRIVATE PERSONS AND SEVERAL CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS ARE VERY MUCH CONCERNED WITH THE

NARR: PRESERVATION OF ALEXANDRIA'S HISTORIC HERITAGE. THEY ARE  
(CONT'D) RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RECENT RESTORATION OF THE LLOYD HOUSE,  
A REAL TREASURE OF OLD ARCHITECTURE, BUILT IN 1796. AT  
FIRST A PRIVATE RESIDENCE, IT WAS TURNED INTO A ROOMING HOUSE  
IN THE 1940S AND DETERIORATED RAPIDLY. IN 1959, IT WAS  
SCHEDULED FOR DEMOLITION.

TAPE: CUT ONE -- PLITT

"IN 1954, A MAN BY THE NAME OF NEW, HE WAS A TEXAS OILMAN,  
ATTEMPTED RESTORATION. HE WORKED WITH THE RESTORATION, AND  
IT WAS HIS IDEA TO HAVE AN OFFICE BUILDING HERE. HOWEVER,  
THE CITIZENS WERE VERY UPSET IN ALEXANDRIA TO THINK THAT THIS  
FINE OLD HOME, DATING ALL THE WAY BACK, WITH ITS FINE  
GEORGIAN ARCHITECTURE, WAS GOING TO BE TURNED INTO A MODERN  
20TH CENTURY GLASS STRUCTURED OFFICE BUILDING. AND SO  
BEGAN A REAL CITIZENS' ATTEMPT TO SAVE THIS BUILDING, TO  
SAVE LLOYD HOUSE. IT IS CALLED THE LLOYD HOUSE BECAUSE A  
FAMILY BY THE NAME OF LLOYD DID INDEED OCCUPY IT FOR ALMOST  
A HUNDRED YEARS."

NARR: THAT WAS JEAN PLITT, DIRECTOR OF THE ALEXANDRIA LIBRARY  
SYSTEM WHICH NOW IS ENTRUSTED WITH CARING FOR THE LLOYD  
HOUSE, A CHARMING RED BRICK STRUCTURE WITH A MANSARD  
ROOF. THE BUILDING HAS EIGHT LARGE ROOMS, EACH A PERFECT  
SQUARE AND EACH WITH A FIREPLACE AND TALL GEORGIAN WINDOWS.  
A WIDE, CURVED STAIRCASE LEADS TO THE UPPER FLOOR. THE IDEA  
OF LOSING THIS HOUSE WAS ENOUGH TO SPARK CITIZENS TO FORM A  
HISTORIC RESTORATION AND PRESERVATION COMMISSION WHICH PUT  
PRESSURE ON THE ALEXANDRIA ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD AND  
THE CITY COUNCIL TO PREVENT THE OWNER FROM MODERNIZING THE  
LLOYD HOUSE AND CONSTRUCTING A 10-STORY APARTMENT BUILDING  
NEXT TO IT. AGAIN JEAN PLITT:

TAPE: CUT TWO -- PLIT

"THE CITIZENS WORKED VERY HARD. AND THEY OBTAINED PRIVATE FUNDS, THEY OBTAINED STATE FUNDS, THEY OBTAINED CITY FUNDS AND THEY OBTAINED FEDERAL FUNDS TO SAVE THIS HOME. THE HOME FINALLY COST THE CITIZENS COMMITTEE, KNOWN AS THE ALEXANDRIA HISTORIC RESTORATION AND PRESERVATION COMMISSION, 432,000 DOLLARS, WHICH THEY PAID THE TEXAS OIL MAN, AND THEN THEY OWNED IT. SO THAT THIS HOUSE IS ACTUALLY TITLED TO THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA AND HISTORIC RESTORATION AND PRESERVATION COMMISSION THAT IS MADE UP OF PRIVATE CITIZENS IN TOWN. AT THAT POINT, THEY THEN ATTEMPTED RESTORATION. THEY NEEDED MORE MONEY, AND SO FUNDS WERE OBTAINED AGAIN FROM PRIVATE SOURCES, AND THEY WORKED VEPY HARD OVER A THREE YEAR PERIOD TO TURN THIS HOUSE INTO ITS PRESENT STRUCTURE, A VERY DELIGHTFUL TYPE OF SCHOLARLY RESEARCH LIBRARY."

NARR: AN INTERIOR DESIGNER WAS HIRED TO MAKE THE HOUSE LOOK AS IT DID WHEN IT WAS FIRST BUILT. BOOK SHELVES WERE PLACED IN FIVE ROOMS. SOME PERIOD FURNITURE REPRODUCTIONS WERE BROUGHT IN. IMPORTANT PRINTS FROM THE HISTORY OF ALEXANDRIA AND VIRGINIA AND DELIGHTFULLY COLORED PICTURES OF AN EARLY NATURALIST SHOWING REGIONAL FLOWERS, BIRDS AND REPTILES, HANG ON THE WALLS. LOCAL FLORISTS OFFERED DRY FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MANTELPieces TO LEND A MORE HOMEY ATMOSPHERE TO THE STUDY ROOMS.

TAPE: CUT THREE -- PLITT

"THE HOUSE CONTAINS ABOUT 10,000 VOLUMES. THE FIRST FLOOR IS A TYPE OF LIBRARY MUSEUM IN WHICH WE HAVE ROTATING LIBRARY DISPLAYS WITH VARIOUS ARTIFACTS AS WELL AS BOOKS. THE FIRST FLOOR ALSO CONTAINS OUR 1764 LIBRARY. THESE BOOKS ARE ALL OLD, MOST OF THEM ARE FOREIGN IMPRINTS. BUT IT IS REPRESENTATIVE OF A KIND OF PUBLIC LIBRARY...THAT WE HAD IN THIS COUNTRY IN 1794. THESE BOOKS ARE NOT NORMALLY USED FOR RESEARCH TODAY, ALTHOUGH THEY MAY BE WITH PERMISSION. THE SECOND FLOOR HOUSES SOME 6,000 VOLUMES WHICH CONTAIN MOSTLY VIRGINIA AND ALEXANDRIA HISTORY."

NARR: THE LLOYD HOUSE LIBRARY IS NOW AVAILABLE FOR SCHOLARS STUDENTS AND RESEARCHERS OF LOCAL HISTORY. A SERIES OF

NARR:  
(CONT'D)

LECTURES ON REGIONAL HISTORY IS BEING PLANNED. AND TO ADD TO ITS MATERIAL CITIZENS ARE INVITED TO BRING IN THEIR HISTORIC MEMORABILIA AND TO RECORD ON TAPE THE STORIES OF THE PAST PRESERVED IN THEIR FAMILIES. THE BUILDING IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC SEVEN DAYS A WEEK. EVERYONE IS INVITED TO WALK IN, TO LOOK AND BROWSE OR TO ASK THE STAFF FOR HELP. WHEN THE LLOYD HOUSE OPENED ITS DOORS IN NOVEMBER, SOME FIVE HUNDRED PERSONS CAME TO SEE THE RESTORED MANSION MANY OF THEM PLEDGING GIFTS OF ORIGINAL PERIOD FURNITURE.

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NEXT ANOTHER DATeline.

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